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3-8-10 Hearing – Testimony

I am here in support of HB 5425, section 2.

- I am dually certified as both a regular education elementary school teacher grades K through 6th for the state of Massachusetts as well as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst.
- My training to become a teacher was vastly different than my training to become a behavior analyst. Very different, yet ultimately complimentary. I am a better teacher because I have been trained as a behavior analyst, and a better behavior analyst because of my experiences as a teacher. Today, my job is to collaborate with special education teachers to utilize my skills as a behavior analyst in conjunction with their skills as special educators. If I had not been trained to be a behavior analyst my teacher training alone would be completely insufficient for me to be able to design and supervise a comprehensive ABA program for any youngster with special education needs.
- Currently I consult within public schools directly to teachers who service children with disabilities in a number of school districts throughout Connecticut. Some of the teachers I consult to conduct mainstream classroom and the rest run a self-contained classroom. Regardless of the population of students in the room the goal is always that every child is *learning*. To be able to teach any amount of children of any ability you need to have the knowledge and skill set to provide the techniques I learned within my education degree and my graduate degree in behavioral education.
- It is imperative that the professionals working with our special education students have the specific credentials of a BCBA or BCABA. People providing ABA services without the expertise that these credentials hold puts every child with disabilities at risk for not getting the education and future that they deserve. Not only does it jeopardize these children's' futures, but not having qualified professionals with these credentials puts school systems in a place to be targeted for parental lawsuits. Especially when these are the parents of a child who was previously required to be serviced by a BCBA within a birth to three program.
- Section 2 will not only clarify the credentials for helping to service children with autism but it will help to ensure that these students have the best possible education and future provided to them.